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The UN's Greta climate gamble

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Body

At the age of 17, Malala Yousafzai became the youngest person to receive a Nobel Prize. The Pakistani activist had risen to world prominence as an advocate for women's and children's rights.

The world's current superstar teen activist, 16-year-old Greta Thunberg, has also been nominated for a Nobel, which would make her the youngest recipient.

Greta is no Malala. She has been on an easy glide path to media celebrity and TV stardom, the product of a cultural and education system - and a global ideological movement - that finds it useful to manipulate children into becoming anxious activists.

Having been panicked into a fear of climate change by the United Nations'monster climate machine, Greta effectively chastised UN officials for using and manipulating her. "I shouldn't be up here. I should be back at school on the other side of the ocean," she said on Monday. "Yet you all come to us young people for hope. How dare you! You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words."

The UN has gambled on Greta. Whether that gamble will pay off over time is an open question.

In interviews, Greta has said she was first introduced to climate change risks as an eight year old at school. According to Greta and her family, she was diagnosed with Asperger's and suffers from "selective mutism," a condition described in textbooks as a "severe anxiety disorder" that renders a person unable to speak in certain situations.

That condition, Greta has implied, was exacerbated by climate fears brought on by exposure to climate alarmism at school. In a media interview last March, she talked of how she was overcome with fear and anxiety at the prospect of a climate catastrophe. "I overthink. Some people can just let things go, but I can't, especially if there's something that worries me or makes me sad. I remember when I was younger, and in school, our teachers showed us films of plastic in the ocean, starving polar bears and so on. I cried through all the movies. My classmates were concerned when they watched the film, but when it stopped, they started thinking about other things. I couldn't do that. Those pictures were stuck in my head."

Greta says that at the age of 11, her psychological problems deepened. The climate scare was "too unreal," she said at a Ted Talk. "And so when I was 11 I became ill, I fell into depression, I stopped talking and I stopped eating, and in two months I lost 10 kilos of weight." She said she was then diagnosed with Asperger's, selective mutism and OCD - Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder.

In a recent comment, Greta described her Asperger's as a "superpower" that allows her to cut through the haze of uncertainty. Her mental condition, she says, forces her to see things "in black and white," meaning there is no middle ground, no room for scientific discussion, no justification for political and economic analysis.

All of which may explain her simple portrayal of the climate issue. "You say nothing in life is black or white. But that is a lie. A very dangerous lie," she told the World Economic Forum in January. "Either we prevent 1.5C of warming or we don't. Either we avoid setting off that irreversible chain reaction beyond human control or we don't. Either we choose to go on as a civilization or we don't. That is as black or white as it gets. There are no grey areas when it comes to survival."

As for her parents, the official story is that Greta converted them to the climate crusade. She says it was only after her depression and climate panic that her parents - Swedish opera and pop music star Malena Ernman and Svante Thunberg, her actor/author father - became climate activists themselves. Her father, now described as "her PR person" and "chauffeur," appeared beside Greta at the United Nations'climate confab in Poland last year.

It's hard to believe all this was just an ideological family accident produced by Greta's sudden conversion to climate change at school. Her father, Svante, is said to be named after Svante Arrhenius, a 19th-century Swedish scientist who received a Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1902 for his theory that atmospheric increases in carbon dioxide created a greenhouse effect. Under her parents'PR guidance, and with help from assorted professional activists, Greta is clearly not a one-girl band. In her speech last December to the UN climate conference in Poland, Greta - then 15 - said "I speak on behalf of ***Climate Justice*** Now," a slick global organization supported by a Who's Who of the activist industry.

Meanwhile, Svante and Malena have a new book, Scenes from the Heart, coming out. And Greta's brief speeches to the rich and politically famous at the high altars of political power have been assembled into an online Penguin book titled No One is Too Small to Make a Difference. Only a few thousand words long, the speeches offer little more than repetitive sloganeering harangues about how nothing is being done to fight climate change.

This is where modern pedagogy, political activism and the UN bureaucracy has taken us, to the point where a 16-year-old teenager who has mastered the art of regurgitating political slogans and simplistic world views is offered up as an intellectual leader, a wise prophet who possesses such sweeping knowledge and understanding of the world of science, politics and economics that she can lecture world leaders - and be nominated for a Nobel Prize.

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